maggie and milly and molly and may

E. E. Cummings

1958

E. E. Cummings (1894-1962) was an American poet known for trying new and different things in his poems. He played with the form of poems, or how they look on the page and broke many other "rules" of writing. In this poem about four girls at the beach, he chooses not to use capital letters or use spaces between punctuation marks and the next word.

As you read, take notes on how maggie and milly and molly and may are different.

10

maggie and milly and molly and may

went down to the beach(to play one day)

and maggie discovered a shell that sang

so sweetly she couldn’t remember her troubles,and

milly befriended a stranded star

whose rays five languid fingers were;

and molly was chased by a horrible thing

which raced sideways while blowing bubbles:and

may came home with a smooth round stone

as small as a world and as large as alone.

For whatever we lose(like a you or a me)

it’s always ourselves we find in the sea

"maggie and milly and molly and may". Copyright © 1956, 1984, 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust, from COMPLETE POEMS: 1904-1962 by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.

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Notes

AllDefinitionsFootnotes

1. weak; slow

2. **Horrible** *(adjective) :* causing a feeling of fear

Sick

Shel Silverstein
2002

Sheldon Allan "Shel" Silverstein (1930-1999) was an American poet, cartoonist, and author of children's books. In this poem, the speaker explains why she cannot go to school.

As you read, take notes on examples of unusual illnesses.

“I cannot go to school today,”

Said little Peggy Ann McKay.

“I have the measles and the mumps,

A gash, a rash and purple bumps.

My mouth is wet, my throat is dry,

I’m going blind in my right eye.

My tonsils are as big as rocks,

I’ve counted sixteen chicken pox

And there’s one more — that’s seventeen,

And don’t you think my face looks green?

My leg is cut, my eyes are blue —

It might be instamatic flu.

I cough and sneeze and gasp and choke,

I’m sure that my left leg is broke —

My hip hurts when I move my chin,

My belly button’s caving in,

My back is wrenched, my ankle’s sprained,

My ’pendix pains each time it rains.

My nose is cold, my toes are numb,

I have a sliver in my thumb.

My neck is stiff, my voice is weak,

I hardly whisper when I speak.

My tongue is filling up my mouth,

I think my hair is falling out.

My elbow’s bent, my spine ain’t straight,

My temperature is one-o-eight.

My brain is shrunk, I cannot hear,

There is a hole inside my ear.

I have a hangnail, and my heart is — what?

What's that? What's that you say?

You say today is... Saturday?

G'bye, I'm going out to play!"

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Notes

1. a long deep cut
2. red bumps or spots that break out on the skin
3. **Gasp** *(verb) :* to take in air through the mouth suddenly and quickly
4. hurt by turning in the wrong direction
5. **Sprain** *(verb) :* to hurt a body part by twisting it
6. short for the word appendix, an organ in the body
7. a small chip of wood or glass that has broken off
8. **Shrink** *(verb) :* to get smaller

Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me Too

Shel Silverstein
2002

Sheldon Allan "Shel" Silverstein (1930-1999) was an American poet, cartoonist, screenwriter, and author of children's books. In this poem, three friends go on an adventure together.

As you read, take notes on how the three friends feel about flying.

Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me too

Went for a ride in a flying shoe.

“Hooray!”

“What fun!”

“It’s time we flew!”

Said Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me too.

Ickle was captain, and Pickle was crew

And Tickle served coffee and mulligan stew

As higher

And higher

And higher they flew,

Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me too.

Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me too,

Over the sun and beyond the blue.

“Hold on!”

“Stay in!”

“I hope we do!”

Cried Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me too.

Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me too

Never returned to the world they knew,

And nobody

Knows what’s

Happened to

Dear Ickle Me, Pickle Me, Tickle Me too.

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Notes

1. **Crew** *(noun) :* the people who work on a ship or airplane
2. **Stew** *(noun) :* a thick slow-cooked soup of meat and vegetables